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November 2, 1938

Circular Letter No. 60

To: Superintendents, Principals, and English Teachers

Re: Supplementary Reading

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The accompanying book lists have been prepared in accordance with the information obtained from the questionnaires returned by English teachers during the latter part of the school year 1937-38. The titles listed on that questionnaire represent a compilation of all supplementary reading lists sent out by the Department of Education during the last ten years. Therefore it seems logical to assume that the various school libraries contain many of these books.

In order to discourage among pupils the current practice of making reports on the same books year after year, it has been decided that it is necessary to have definite book lists for each English course. Since we must first make use of all material on hand, we have started these lists with books which we believe are already in our school libraries. The books which have been starred are recommended by the Standard Catalog for High School Libraries (1937 edition) or by the with a star may be used if they are already in the library but should not be restocked.

In the near future we expect to send out lists of new books from which titles may be selected for new purchases. All suggestions given on the questionnaires returned by teachers last spring will be given due consideration and all additional suggestions which teachers wish to submit will be welcomed.

An attempt is being made to avoid including books for which translations in Spanish are easily available as well as those on which recent movies have been based.

All teachers are at liberty to exclude from any book list titles of books with which they are not familiar or which they have found definitely unsuited to their groups.

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Pupils should keep a record of their supplementary reading on cumulative cards or cumulative booklets which should be passed on with the pupil at the end of the school year. In addition to these records, the teacher should prepare definite questions or ask for individual reports to be made during "free reading periods," laboratory periods, or any other convenient time.

A minimum of

- 4 books for first year
- 6 books for second year
- 6 books for third year
- 6 books for fourth year

should be required, but the teacher should encourage above-average pupils to read more than that. Some leniency in selection may be allowed for pupils who read more than the required number of books; but pupils should not be allowed to report on books included in the book list for other grades than their own.

On some occasions it will prove interesting to substitute for individual book reports some of the following activities:

1. Posters advertising a book the pupil has just read
2. Fancy jacket for a book the pupil has just read
3. Telephone conversation between two pupils, one of whom is asking the other to loan or recommend some book to him.
4. Conversation between student who is acting as clerk in a book store and one who enters to make a purchase.
5. Conversation between pupil who represents a librarian and another who is seeking a book.

All methods of stimulating interest in extensive reading should be employed.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) DR. NESTOR I. VINCENTY
ACTING COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION